

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1295

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SU

SUBJECT: DETAILS RE SUDANESE REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE ON
NEW MILITARY HOSPITAL

REF: KHARTOUM 1211

1. DURING LUNCHEON JUNE 5, I HAD OPPORTUNITY DISCUSS SUDANESE INTEREST IN ASSISTANCE RE NEW MILITARY HOSPITAL WITH MAJOR GENERAL HUSSEIN ABDEL RAHMAN AL-SHALALLY, CHIEF, MEDICAL SERVICES, PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES (PAF). AL-SHALALLY, WHO INDICATED HE HAS CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT NIMEIRI, SAID THAT NIMEIRI HAD PUBLICLY PROMISED IN 1969 THAT HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL DIFFICULT CASES WOULD BE BUILT IN OMDURMAN, TO WHICH BOTH ILL MILITARY AND CIVILIANS MIGHT BE REFERRED. FACILITY WOULD BE STAFFED BY PAF MEDICAL SERVICES WITH SOME CIVILIAN CONSULTANTS. AL-SHALALLY CLAIMED SOVIETS HAD AGREED TAKE ON THIS AID PROJECT IN 1969 AND HAD PREPARED DETAILED DRAWINGS. AFTER COUP-COUNTERCOUP OF MID-1971, HOWEVER, QUESTION OF SOVIET ASSISTANCE HAD BEEN PUT ON BACK BURNER. AL-SHALALLY CLAIMED RUSSIANS HAD RECENTLY SAID THEY REMAINED PREPARED CONSTRUCT FACILITY BUT AL-SHALALLY--WHO HAD BEEN SELECTED BY NIMEIRI AS ONE OF FIRST PAF OFFICERS VISIT US AFTER RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS IN 1972--HAD SUGGESTED TO NIMEIRI DURING LATTER'S MARCH
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VISIT TO IRAN THAT USG BE APPROACHED.

2. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO AL-SHALALLY FOR FOREGOING BACKGROUND, I EXPLAINED TO HIM ON PERSONAL BASIS, AS I HAD TO FONMIN (REFTEL, THAT US ARMY NOT IN BUSINESS BUILDING MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITIES AND THAT AVAILABLE AID FUNDS FULLY COMMITTED. I EXPRESSED DOUBT USG WOULD BE ABLE TAKE ON PROPOSED SCHEME BUT SAID THAT I HAD RECOMMENDED TO WASHINGTON THAT APPROPRIATE MEDICAL OR ENGINEERING OFFICER MIGHT BE SENT OUT TO LOOK OVER EXISTING PLANS AND MAKE ANY SURLESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION WHICH SUCH EXPERTS EXPERIENCE MIGHT SUGGEST. I EMPHASIZED THAT ANY SUCH TRIP WOULD BE ENTIRELY WITHOUT COMMITMENT TO PROJECT AS WHOLE. AL-SHALALLY SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE USEFUL FIRST STEP.

3. COMMENT. FOREGOING MAKES GENESIS "MAIN REFERENCE HOSPITAL" PROJECT SOMEWHAT CLEARER. IN ADDITION ABSENCE CORDIALITY IN CURRENT GOS/USSR RELATIONS, FACT IT TOOK RUSSIANS SOME 12 YEARS FROM INCEPTION SOBA HOSPITAL PROJECT TO ITS INAUGURATION LAST MONTH, STILL SOMEWHAT UNFINISHED, HAS DISCOURAGED SUDANESE FROM AGAIN TURNING THIS SOURCE. NIMEIRI'S 1969 PUBLIC PROMISE ACCOUNTS FOR HIS OWN CONTINUING PERSONAL INTEREST AND SUGGESTS AGAIN STRONG DESIRABILITY OUR AVOIDING TOTALLY NEGATIVE RESPONSE R FOREIGN MINISTER'S APPROACH (REFTEL) IF WE ARE TO KEEP NIMEIRI IN GOOD MOOD DURING PERIOD WHEN HE MUST DECIDE ON EXTENT, IF ANY, EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY IN CASE KHARTOEV TERRORISTS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED. WOULD APPRECIATE PRELIMINARY DEPT/DOD REACTION URGENTLY AS FONMIN DUE BACK SHORTLY AND BSO CASE MAY WELL REACH MOMENT OF TRUTH IN ABOUT 10 DAYS.
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